

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Availability of \$10 Million in Climate Change Funding

Funding will Help Communities Implement Priorities Identified through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program

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NORTHAMPTON — In the largest release of climate change resiliency funding for Massachusetts communities in state history, the Baker-Polito Administration today announced the availability of \$10 million for the [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness \(MVP\) Program](#) (</municipal-vulnerability-preparedness-mvp-program>). The grant and designation program, which was created in 2017 as part of Governor Baker's [Executive Order 569](#)

</eea/pr-2016/governor-signs-climate-change-strategy-executive-order.html>), provides communities with funding and technical support to identify hazards, develop strategies to improve resilience, and implement priority actions to adapt to climate change. With this announcement, made by Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito during an event in Northampton, the Administration has now committed \$17 million through the MVP program to help communities prepare for climate change.

“Communities across the Commonwealth have witnessed firsthand the impacts of climate change, and through the MVP Program our administration continues to demonstrate our commitment to supporting cities and towns in preparing for the challenges ahead,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “The availability of \$10 million in funding for municipalities, in addition to our administration’s sustainable legislative proposal to provide \$1.3 billion over 10 years to invest in climate-smart infrastructure and nature-based solutions in communities, will work to protect public health, safety, and property across Massachusetts.”

“The decisions we make today will determine the well-being of future generations, and investing in our communities will equip cities and towns with the tools they need to build resilience,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “Our significant new funding proposal will ensure all communities can begin making investments in strategies that protect residents and natural resources, and contribute to strong economic growth throughout the state.”

The \$10 million announced today will go towards **[MVP Action Grants](#)**

<https://www.commbuys.com/bsa/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-19-1042-ENV-ENV01-36247&external=true&parentUrl=bid>

which fund implementation of on-the-ground projects to address the specific vulnerabilities to climate change identified by each municipality through their MVP Planning process. Projects are focused on proactive strategies to address climate change impacts and may include retrofitting and adapting infrastructure, detailed vulnerability assessments or design and engineering studies, stormwater upgrades, dam retrofits and removals, culvert upgrades, drought mitigation, actions to protect environmental justice communities and improve public health, energy resilience, and strategies that focus on implementing nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration and floodplain protection. In just two years since the program’s launch, almost half of the cities and towns in the Commonwealth have enrolled in the MVP program, which pairs local leadership and knowledge with a significant investment of resources and funding from the state to address ongoing climate change impacts like sea level rise, inland flooding, storms, and extreme temperatures.

“The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program allows the state to work together with municipalities to identify vulnerabilities and then employ nature-based, cost-effective solutions to address those challenges and build resilience” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “The funds awarded from the MVP Action Grant program will allow municipalities

to implement priority actions to prepare for the effects of climate change while strengthening community engagement and collaboration among town departments.”

To be eligible for an MVP Action Grant, communities must be designated an “MVP community.” To become designated, municipalities can apply for an MVP planning grant to work through the **Community Resilience Building** (<https://www.communityresiliencebuilding.com/>) workshop process to identify key climate-related hazards, vulnerabilities and strengths, develop adaptation actions, and prioritize next steps. Results of the workshops and planning efforts are then used to inform existing local plans, grant applications, budgets, and policies. Upon successful completion of the program, municipalities are designated as a “Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Community.” Designated MVP communities can then apply for MVP Action Grants to implement key priorities and projects identified through the planning process. There are currently 156 communities participating in the program across the state, representing 44 percent of the state’s municipalities.

The program is led by an experienced project manager from the town with a core team of town staff and volunteers representing planning departments, emergency managers, conservation commissioners, economic councils, the business community, environmental justice communities, and other key stakeholders.

The MVP Action Grants are open to all municipal governments in Massachusetts in FY 2019 that have received MVP designation. Projects that proposed nature-based solutions or strategies that rely on green infrastructure or conservation and enhancement of natural systems to improve community resilience receive higher scores. **MVP Planning grants** (<https://www.commbuys.com/bsa/external/bidDetail.sdo?bidId=BD-19-1042-ENV-ENV01-34410&parentUrl=activeBids>) are also open through May 4, 2019 to communities seeking MVP designation with \$1 million available in funding.

Governor Baker recently filed **legislation** (</news/governor-baker-let-governor-polito-announce-new-climate-adaptation-programs-local-aid-proposals>) to support municipalities and help protect Massachusetts residents, communities, economy, and infrastructure from the adverse effects of climate change, through a modest increase in the excise on real estate transfers to fund a substantial and sustained investment in climate change adaptation. The revenue would be directed towards investments in resilient infrastructure to help make communities safer, keep vital services online, reduce the long-term costs of climate-related risks and protect the value of property across the Commonwealth. The proposal is estimated to generate \$1.3 billion over 10 years which would be dedicated to the Commonwealth’s Global Warming Solutions Trust Fund to provide funding for resiliency initiatives including grants and technical assistance to communities for

implementing priority actions identified through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program and addressing climate-related risk in cities and towns throughout the state.

In August of 2018 Governor Baker signed [legislation](#) ([/news/governor-baker-signs-legislation-directing-24-billion-to-climate-change-adaptation](#)) which put into law essential components of Governor Baker's Executive Order 569, including the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program and the Statewide Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Plan, as well as authorizing over \$2.4 billion in capital allocations for investments in safeguarding residents, municipalities and businesses from the impacts of climate change, protecting environmental resources, and investing in communities.

"I'm pleased that the Baker-Polito Administration is making these MVP Program grants available so that towns can invest in climate-smart infrastructure," **said State Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton)**. "As the impacts of climate change are already evident, the Commonwealth's response must be multifaceted: we must undertake resiliency planning at the same time we address the root of the problem by increasing the renewables portfolio standard, eliminating net metering caps, and implementing a system of carbon fee and rebate."

"We are in the midst of a climate crisis so these grants will be particularly important to help our community while the Legislature takes up important issues like carbon tax and lifting the net solar metering cap so we can truly mitigate climate change," **said State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa (D-Northampton)**.

"Once again, the Baker-Polito Administration is exercising national leadership in helping local communities respond to the devastating impacts of climate change," **said Jack Clarke, Director of Public Policy at Mass Audubon**. "Whether it be hotter days, accelerated sea-level rise, or stronger storms, these grants are now the new local aid for climate change and will help cities and towns protect themselves from its impacts."

"Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness action grants help communities take tangible steps to manage the unavoidable impacts of climate change by enhancing safety, avoiding community costs while prioritizing nature-based solutions and equity and fairness," **said Wayne Klockner, State Director for the Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts**.

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